

MARIO CARRASCALAO'S PRESS CONFERENCE

Wednesday 11 October 1989

Governor Mario Carrascalao enters the crowded press conference and introduces the ministry of information man who will assist him should he forget his English or his facts and figures. After a brief history of East Timor, no doubt written by the victors, he launches into some 'facts'.

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|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| - Present population.....659,000. | Growth rate 2.63% per year |
| - 1975....40% literate | 1989....92% literate |
| " 70 primary schools | " 560 primary schools |
| " 1 college | " 4 colleges |
| " rice production 26,000t | " rice production 42,000t |
| " corn production 16,000t | " corn production 60,000t |
| " surfaced roads 22 km | " surfaced roads 700 km |
| " 230,000 Catholics | " 580,000 Catholics |

According to a clerk in Dili the per capita income in E.T. is 206,000 rp., compared to an average 600,000 rp. for Republic Indonesia.

"There are still some remnants of Fretilin in the jungle. Two thirds of East Timor is inaccessible mountains. Fretilin is now insignificant but many troops are needed to find people in the mountains. As a civilian who knows nothing about military matters, my opinion is that there are more troops than are necessary in East Timor.

Not one person has been arrested in relation to the Pope's visit. In May and June, 27 people were arrested for helping Fretilin.

Not 100% will be happy until full integration with Indonesia. Until there are no special troops in East Timor and until money, justice and foreign policies are resolved. "

Reaction to Bishop Belo's call for a referendum - "The Bishop did not have a political intention. He was simply trying to influence towards a better society. The letter has not had an effect. A referendum is not possible in East Timor.

Many houses were bombed and people killed by Fretilin. If there was a referendum there would be mass killings. People will want revenge. Tribes will want to fight tribes. During civil war whole villages were killed, tens of thousands of people died. The East Timorese do not want any more war or killings.

The Pope's visit has a very special meaning. Those not in favour of integration may interpret the visit as a political thing. All of Fretilins lies of the past will be killed by the Pope's visit. Journalists will see that the information spread by Fretilin was false.

No obstacles to people attending Mass.

No significance of those opposing the Pope's visit. In 450 years of Portuguese rule, no Pope visited East Timor. After only fourteen years of Indonesian rule the Pope is already visiting.

The population growth (2.38%) is one of the highest in Indonesia. Timorese people don't usually implement family planning as most are conservative Catholics. Vanatutu - depo prevera - is used throughout Indonesia. The average family size is between nine and ten children.

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Fifty-six people were imprisoned in Cipinang, Jakarta. The highest sentence was five years. The provisions were not comfortable enough in East Timor."

Q. Has Bishop Belo got a political congregation which is trying to destroy integration?

A. East Timor is a social problem. Lots of children were killed or orphaned. Perhaps Bishop Belo sees it as a political problem. East Timorese want to solve their social problems through integration.

Chris McMahon
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